(ii) Two workshops were organized in New Delhi in September 2000 and April, 2004 to work out a comprehensive strategy for conservation of vultures in consultation with scientists.

(iii) The State Governments have been advised to draw a comprehensive action plan for effective conservation of vultures.

(iv) Bombay Natural History Soceity in collaboration with the Haryana State Forest Department has taken up a project on conservation of vultures. A 'Vulture Captive Care facility' has been established at Panchkula.

(v) The Ministry of Health has been requested to replace the use of the drug diclofenac with suitable alternative drugs.

Depletion of forest cover

219. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is considerable depletion of forest cover in the country over the last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons for the same and effects thereof; and

(c) what measures are contemplated to increase the green cover and check environmental degradation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Measures undertaken by the Government are:—

(i) Legal measures like Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and Environmental Protection Act, 1986 and the rules, guidelines thereof.

(ii) Management measures like working of forests accroding to approved Working Plans etc.

(iii) Financial measures like providing assistance to the States/Union Territories under Centrally Sponsored Schemes and externally

aided projects for undertaking afforestation programmes and protection & conservation of forests.

(iv) A network of protected areas has been established.

(v) The National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme is being implemented through two-tier mechanism-Forest Development Agencies at the Forest Division Level and Joint Forest Management Committee at the village level.

Model Botanical Survey

†220. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any guideline of model botanical survey has been drawn up;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):(a) Yes Sir.

(b) The main objective of conducting botanical surveys is to collect plant samples from different regions/ecosystems for documentation of plant diversity of these regions/ecosystems. As an ideal specimen (sample) should bear flower and fruit (ideally both), the surveys are conducted in different seasons of a calendar year matching the flowering and fruiting of herbs, shrubs and trees of the region. Along with the collection of samples, the information on life form of the species, locality, altitude of the collection site, habitat, local name and uses and such features such as colour of the flower/leaf, bark, fragrance, height/girth and other characteristics of the plant are also recorded.

(c) Does not arise.

Data Base of Herbs

†221. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any data-base of herbs has been prepared in the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.